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NUTRITION COMMITTEE NEWS

For exchange of information on nutrition education and school lunch activities.

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MEETINGS OF NUTRITION COMMITTEES

Members of nutrition committees have taken part in a number of meetings and institutes in the past year or so. The Maine State Nutrition Committee held a State Nutrition Institute in late 1956 to consider nutrition problems in the State and what might be done about them. In May 1957, the New Jersey Nutrition Council sponsored a Youth Forum on Nutrition to consider teenage nutrition. The New England States held a regional conference of State nutrition committees, also in May. A meeting of nutrition committee members occurred at the same time (June) and place (St. Louis) as the American Home Economics Association convention.

Although the designs for these meetings varied, all provided opportunities for members of nutrition committees to discuss common problems together. Members of the State committees which planned these meetings have prepared the accounts which follow.

Maine initiates an Institute

The first State Nutrition Institute to be held in Maine took place at the State House, in Augusta, on Friday, November 30, 1956. The conference theme was *Nutrition Today—How Do We Stand?*

Participants were welcomed by the general chairman, Dr. Kathryn E. Briwa of the University of Maine, and by Governor Edmund S. Muskie. Dr. Helen S. Mitchell, of the University of Massachusetts, discussed the institute's theme with reference to nutrition in the Nation. Dr. Mary M. Clayton of the Maine Agricultural Experiment Station, in discussing the theme as it applied to the State, described the clinical and dietary findings on the Maine residents examined during the Northeast Regional Nutritional Status Studies begun in 1947.

A panel consisting of an elementary teacher, public health nurse, home demonstration agent, city school lunch program director, physician, and parent, and moderated by a health educator discussed together for an

hour, each from his own viewpoint, what the community can do about current nutrition problems.

Following the panel, four groups met in buzz sessions to discuss nutrition problems of the preschool group, school age group, adults, and the aged, and to make recommendations toward their solution.

Dr. Marion D. Sweetman of the University of Maine closed the sessions by summarizing what problems the institute had pointed out, particularly the need for more emphasis on protective foods in the diet of school children, the continuing need to expose nutritional quackery, and the probable advisability of reducing the amount of fat consumed.

New Jersey teen-agers take part in a forum

A successful statewide Governor's Conference on Nutrition in 1956 led the New Jersey Nutrition Council to hold a Youth Forum on Nutrition for the northern half of the State in the Academy of Medicine in Newark on May 7, 1957.

Prior to the meeting studies were made to learn whether New Jersey teen-agers have satisfactory or unsatisfac-

When they met together last June in St. Louis, Mo., nutrition committee members asked that NCN report recent special meetings of nutrition committees. They were concerned that important meetings might otherwise go unreported because the sponsoring nutrition committee had no means to publish the proceedings. This issue answers their request, and shows some of the ways nutrition committees are getting together and exchanging information. Reports of similar meetings of other nutrition committees will be welcome and reported in NCN as space permits.

tory nutrition practices, and if satisfactory, how their good eating habits have been formed. Food habit studies of about 4,000 teen-agers in northern New Jersey were conducted in communities representing a variety of situations: Large regional high school, large city, wealthy residential community, rural county, metropolitan district, small middle-income group, out-of-school community organization.

Through cooperation of the Curriculum Division of the State Department of Education complete participation of six high schools was secured. A Red Cross worker conducted studies in public and private schools in two cities. A YWCA undertook a study which was later analyzed by a nutritionist of the State Department of Health. An earlier food habit study organized by the New Jersey Nutrition Council was repeated in all schools of a rural county. A high school supplied data compiled by students who had prepared, tabulated, and analyzed their own food habit study during a school-wide *Nutrition Week Project*. The reports indicated meals of these teen-agers had insufficient amounts of milk, fruits, vegetables, and eggs.

High schools throughout northern New Jersey were invited to send teen-age representatives to a youth forum planned to appeal to this age group. Five teen-agers, representing the groups in which the studies were made, took part in the panel on *Nutrition As We See It*, held in the afternoon, after school. Dorothy Gordon, who conducts the television program of the New York Times Youth Forum, was moderator. Columnist Ida Jean Kain was nutrition consultant. The young people gave their reasons for the poor food habits found in their groups. Two of them admitted they seldom ate breakfast. There was lively discussion of how wise selection of snacks might contribute to better nutrition.

Because snacks are an important part of the day's food for teen-agers, a variety of nutritious snacks was served to the high school students as they came in to the meeting. Miss Mildred Arnold, American Institute of Baking, explained the nutritive value of the snacks, and the dietary essentials in enriched bread. The New Jersey Milk Industry Association provided milk. Least popular of the snacks (judged by amount consumed) were raw vegetables.

The evening program of an adult symposium on *Nutrition Problems of Young People* tried to find answers acceptable to the two teen-age reactors on the panel. Dr. Richard Beck, Superintendent of Schools in Freehold, was the leader. The parents' point of view was presented by Mrs. A. G. Link, Past President of the New Jersey Parent-Teachers' Association. Miss Kain spoke for the nutritionists, and Dr. S. William Kalb represented the New Jersey Medical Society. Dr. Jean L. Burton,

psychologist from Rutgers University, discussed psychological factors in food habits. There were also comments and questions from doctors and dentists in the audience.

The evening panel concluded that meals should be family affairs and that eating patterns are set in the home. Parents are responsible for seeing that children have adequate time and food for breakfast. Adults who work with youth can also help them develop appreciation of the importance of wise food selections for good health, personal appearance, and outlook on life.

Dr. Geoffrey Esty, Director of Constructive Health in the State Department of Health, summarized the day's discussions, pointing out the need for more effective nutrition education for teen-agers.

The committee, which planned and carried out the program for the forum, was headed by Dr. Edna Sostman, nutritionist, Rutgers University, and Mrs. Carolyn Addison, nutritionist, Newark Chapter of the American Red Cross. The State School Lunch Supervisor also served. Other committee members were from the State Department of Health and the Extension Service. All State Nutrition Council members were given opportunity to participate in planning and to invite members of the organizations they represented to attend. An Extension Service writer took care of newspaper publicity. The Academy of Medicine provided the meeting room and made tape recordings of the talks. The State Medical Society contributed money for essential expenses exceeding the modest registration fee.

Results of the food habit studies were later presented to home economics teachers at a State teachers institute in the fall of 1957, for use in curriculum planning. They will also be made available to other Council member organizations that want to use them.

Interest created by the Youth Forum and the food habits survey in northern New Jersey communities has led the Council to undertake a similar survey in the rest of the State. Results of the statewide survey will be reported in the fall of 1958.

New England holds a regional conference

The idea of having a New England Conference in the spring of 1957 for members of State nutrition committees began at a conference on nutrition in Boston a year earlier. At that time studies done in several New England States suggested there were shortages of certain vitamins and minerals in the diets of many New England residents, indicating a need for more and perhaps better nutrition education.

In the fall of 1956 a letter and questionnaire were sent to nutrition people in State health departments, State supervisors of school lunch programs, and chair-

men of State nutrition committees in New England, asking if they would be interested in participating in such a meeting. Interest ran high, so a planning meeting was held in Boston that fall. At that time it was decided the conference would be held in conjunction with the decennial of the Connecticut Nutrition Council in Hartford. The latter group would be responsible for local arrangements.

A committee of one representative from each State planned the program. Two State nutrition committees contributed toward expenses, as did several Connecticut organizations, such as the Pomological Society, Poultry and Bakers Association, and the State Medical Society. The Connecticut Milk Producers Association was host for the luncheon meeting. Valuable aid was also given by representatives from the Institute of Home Economics and the Children's Bureau, Washington, D. C.

Over 100 persons attended the meeting in Hartford on May 20 and 21. Among them were educators, physicians, home economists in business, school lunch personnel, hospital dietitians, nutritionists, dentists, and interested lay people. The theme chosen for the meeting was *Moving Ahead with Nutrition Education*. Dr. Helen S. Mitchell, University of Massachusetts, keynote speaker, gave an enthusiastic start to the meeting.

A panel discussion was held on *Focusing on Problems in Nutrition Education*. Miss Marjorie Heseltine of the Children's Bureau was moderator. Speakers representing each of the New England States talked about nutrition education in relation to the family, school lunch, institutions, teacher and inservice training, and medical education. The questions and problems brought forth by the panel speakers stimulated discussion in workshops held the following day. Everyone took part in the workshops which were called *Adjusting Our Lens to Meet Our Local Situation*.

Some of the recommendations which came from the workshops were summarized by Miss Margaret Ross, Simmons College, and Dr. Thelma A. Dreis, Institute of Home Economics:

1. Work to include nutrition in the college curriculum (especially teacher training institutions).
2. Work more with other groups, professional and lay.
3. Make available to each State nutrition committee reports of the work being done by local nutritionists in the health departments of two Massachusetts towns, Needham and Wellesley. (When available, these reports will be listed in NCN.)
4. Encourage homemakers with home economics training to serve communities on a part-time basis.
5. Encourage better practical use of mass media, especially radio and TV.
6. To assure accuracy of newspaper reporting, pre-

pare and give to the press in advance nutrition information to be presented at meetings.

7. Make use of TV as available for school programs.

Participants were asked to turn in an evaluation. Aspect of the meeting found most valuable by the greatest number of people was the opportunity to get together with others interested in nutrition and exchange ideas. The discussion groups were the most popular part of the program. Several mentioned that there was a good balance of speeches, panel discussions, and workshops.

Much was learned from these comments, which will be of value in planning future meetings of this nature. For example, the evaluations confirmed that the meeting had been well planned for travel convenience of those attending. The first session was held on Monday afternoon and the meeting concluded after luncheon the following day so all the New England people were able to return to their homes by evening.

The New England group has offered to share its experiences in planning this conference, and to help others with organization and planning of similar meetings in any way it can. Information may be obtained from the Chairman of the Connecticut Nutrition Council, Miss Ruth Cowles, Home Economics Consultant, Connecticut State Department of Education, or Mrs. Eloise Eckler, Chief Nutrition Consultant, Connecticut State Department of Health. Both are located in the State Office Building, Hartford, Conn.

Nutrition committee members get together in St. Louis

A meeting of nutrition committee members was held in the Laclede Gas Company Auditorium in St. Louis, Mo., on Tuesday afternoon, June 25, 1957, during the American Home Economics Association convention there. The Missouri State Nutrition Council and ICNESL cosponsored this meeting. The Missouri Council members arranged for the meeting place and ICNESL members planned the program. Miss Sadye F. Adelson, Institute of Home Economics, was chairman. Miss Dorothy L. Vorhies, University of Missouri, was secretary.

Five-minute reports were given as follows:

Mrs. Maxine Schade, Director of the School Lunch Program, Cape Girardeau, Mo., reported on integration of nutrition education and the school lunch program in Cape Girardeau. The printed report of this study may be obtained from the Missouri Department of Education, Jefferson City, Mo.

Miss Verna Danley, State Department of Education, Trenton, N. J., reported a youth conference on food habits of teen-agers sponsored by the New Jersey Nutrition Council (see report above).

Miss Marion Arnold, Connecticut Dairy Council, discussed the New England conference of State nutrition committees held in May 1957 (see report above).

Mrs. Anne M. Lee, Chairman of the Indiana State Teachers College, Home Economics Department, reported some of the highlights of the 1957 Nutrition Education Conference that was held in Washington in April. In her opinion, one of the most important points stressed by this conference was the need for better cooperation and exchange of information between the person in nutrition education and the person in nutrition research. (See NCN, May-June 1957 and reference 3 for a more complete report of this conference.)

Miss Adelson then asked in what way the State Nutrition Committees and ICNESL could cooperate to assist each other. Discussion brought out the following possibilities:

1. Miss Danley asked how it would be possible to circulate the information obtained from the New Jersey Conference. It was suggested that an issue of Nutrition Committee News be devoted to reports of this conference and of others that might be submitted from nutrition committees. Miss Danley agreed to ask her committee if this would be feasible.

2. It was requested that an issue of Nutrition Committee News be devoted to suggestions for activities of State nutrition committees.

3. Miss Danley stated that financing activities was a problem for their committee and asked how this matter is handled by other States. Members of the following committees gave suggestions:

Indiana: Receives funds from member organizations to carry on such programs as a TV series.

Louisville: Gives an institute for professional groups every two years for three consecutive evenings. A registration fee of \$5 is charged. This defrays the speakers' expenses and honorarium and all costs connected with the institute.

Illinois: Holds an annual 1-day conference with a registration fee of \$1.

4. The comment was made that institutes held by nutrition committees need to be better dramatized. Dr. Marietta Eichelberger reported that three television shows on weight control by the Chicago Nutrition Association had occasioned a large response of questions and requests for leaflets from viewers. A man actually trying to lose weight, the nutritionist working with him and his wife were the cast who showed the weight reduction program at work. A discussion was held on whether kin-

scopes could be made for general distribution of successful television programs.

5. The Illinois Nutrition Committee and the Chicago Nutrition Association are conducting a survey to determine the nutrition activities of selected organizations in Illinois which work with nutrition problems in order to define areas in which these organizations could cooperate for a more effective nutrition program.

6. The Connecticut Nutrition Council has prepared eight feature articles with pictures during the past year which were published in the magazine section of a Sunday newspaper. The subjects have included cooking for two, school lunch, food for teen-agers, food during pregnancy, and obesity.

7. A request was made that the ICNESL notify State and local nutrition committees when any of their members are going to be in the area.

The chairman added that the ICNESL in turn would like to be informed when officers of nutrition committees or their representatives contemplate a visit to Washington. When this has been done, as many ICNESL members as possible have come together for a luncheon or other meeting with the visiting nutrition committee member. Such meetings have always seemed of mutual advantage.

It was voted to hold meetings of nutrition committee members at the time and place of AHEA's annual meeting each year.

Participants expressed enthusiasm for the program and the opportunity this meeting afforded to talk with each other.

[*Editor's note:* The ICNESL has named a committee to consider plans for the 1958 meeting of nutrition committee members which will be held early in AHEA's convention, June 24 to 27, in Philadelphia. Definite time, place, and program will be announced in a later issue.]

REFERENCES

1. THE REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF FIRST NUTRITION INSTITUTE. State House, Augusta, Maine, November 30, 1956. Sponsored by the Maine State Nutrition Committee.

2. PROCEEDINGS, GOVERNOR'S CONFERENCE ON NUTRITION, APRIL 11, 1956. In Public Health News, Vol. 37, No. 9. New Jersey State Department of Health, September 1956.

3. PROCEEDINGS OF NUTRITION EDUCATION CONFERENCE, APRIL 1-3, 1957. U. S. Dept. Agr. Misc. Pub. 745, 74 pp., November 1957. GPO, 45 cents, Washington, D. C.

Institute of Home Economics, Agricultural Research Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in consultation with the Inter-agency Committee on Nutrition Education and School Lunch. (The printing of this publication has been approved by the Bureau of the Budget, July 27, 1955.)
